

Chapter 70

The guards at the entrance froze, their hands hovering near their weapons but unsure what to do next. The man they had all thought failed in getting a pass had just been granted access.

Conversations across the entrance died that very moment. All eyes turned toward the man they had dismissed only moments ago.

The woman in a black dress who had told him that he didn't belong and won't have access was now in shock. Her mouth parted slightly, but no words came. Her brows pinched together in disbelief.

The gate suddenly pulled open and Ryan smirked..

He turned his head, just enough to glance at the woman beside him. His expression was calm, almost indifferent, but there was something about the look on her face that amused him a little.

"As you have seen it's not a debit card, I knew what I was doing , " he said, with a low and calm voice, but the lady didn't move immediately, she was too stunned.

She stood still, her eyes trailing after him as if struggling to make sense of what had just happened. The other guests who had laughed moments ago now looked at Ryan with curiosity.

He walked carefully around the hall as soon as he crossed the gate.

"I need to find him tonight, whoever he is..." Ryan muttered to himself as he kept walking hoping to see anyone that would be directly pointed out as Robert Ryder.

He didn't know what Robert Ryder or Lord Ryder looked like yet. But if he was here, he swore to find him before leaving that banquet.

And when he did, he would make sure the man who took his mother paid for everything.

Ryan walked straight to the place where the main event of the Lord's Banquet would be held. He scanned the room slowly with his eyes. People were already taking their seats around long tables. But Ryan didn't know what Robert Ryder looked like.

"How will I even know him when I see him?" he muttered to himself becoming a little frustrated.

A hand touched his shoulder from behind and in that instant he froze.

He spun around, startled when he saw who had just touched his shoulder.

It was the same woman from outside, the one in the black dress who had been following him about. He couldn't believe she still traced him to that place... he sighed deeply.

"Why are you following me about? Do I owe you anything? I am pretty confused on why you are still here talking to me," Ryan said to her calmly, rubbing his forehead.

She smiled sweetly without saying anything in response to what he had said with hopes of pushing her away.

"For a man with such power to walk in here without a golden pass," she said softly, "you sure look confused and don't seem to know your way around this villa."

"I'm not confused," Ryan replied. "I'm just looking for Lord Ryder, and there is no confusion in that at all."

She shook her head slightly. "How about you drop the act and tell me your real name first? We both know it's not Victor Williams."

Ryan's eyes narrowed shocked by what he had just heard the lady say. "I don't know what you're talking about, please excuse me, I have to find Lord Ryder instantly."

"Oh, please," she said with a smirk. "Your confidence was forced, and you and I know very well you have no idea about who Lord Ryder is, you are on a blind search. Your identity and that name? It is all obviously fake..."

Ryan didn't answer right away. He stood still wondering why this lady was on his back ever since her eyes met his.

His eyes were on the woman in front of him. Could he trust her? Revealing his name in a place like this wasn't a small risk. He had no idea who was loyal to whom. And for all he knew, giving her that information might be the worst mistake he could make.

She leaned in closer, lowering her voice just enough to sound persuasive without drawing attention.

"Tell me your real name," she said, "and I'll point out Lord Ryder to you."

He studied her for a while and then his began considering what to do next. She was calm. Too calm. Either way, Ryan didn't have the luxury of walking away, he wanted to get his mother back at all costs. This place was a maze, and she clearly knew the rules but he didn't. If he wanted answers, he had to take the risk to give her what she wanted.

After a long pause, he exhaled.

"You're right," he said. "My name isn't Victor Wilioms, my real name is Ryan Walker."

She smiled wider, like she had just won something. Ryan looked at her, confused. She normally behaved strange in different ways, but this smile was a bit different, it scared Ryan.

"Thank you for being honest with me, I really do appreciate you making things easy," she said to Ryan with a smile, and then, all of a sudden, the smile faded and she snapped her fingers.

In that instant, two men in black stepped out from behind nearby pillars and grabbed Ryan by both arms. They were huge...clearly not regular staff. He tensed, instinctively trying to pull free but their grasps were too strong.

"What the hell is this?" he demanded, twisting against their grip. "Who are you?"

The woman stepped in, walking to cover the gap between herself and Ryan. There was a strange glint in her eyes, and for the first time, Ryan saw something dangerous and evil in her.

"I've been expecting you, Ryan Walker, didn't know you would look this humble... I was expecting someone so tough."

Ryan froze instantly. "What?"

"I've heard quite a lot about you, Mr. Walker..."

His heart pounded harder. She hadn't just been some well-dressed guest wandering through the hall. She'd known who he was the entire time. Every step of the conversation had been a setup.

"How do you know me?" he asked with a sharp voice.

She didn't answer right away. Instead, she slowly pulled off one of her gloves, folded it neatly, and slipped it into the hand of one of the men,

and then she slapped Ryan hard with that hand.

Ryan's face snapped to the side at first, and then the moment he raised his head back to look at her, she smiled darkly...

"I am Robert Ryder," she said.

Ryan blinked in shock... "You're what?"

She took a step back and raised her chin slightly. "Around here, they call me Lord Ryder, I own this villa."

Ryan's entire body went still.

For hours, he had heard the name Robert Ryder from the police and his uncle Smith. He had imagined an older man, maybe in a suit, maybe surrounded by guards. But what he just discovered made his mouth drop.

He stared at the woman standing in front of him, struggling to make sense of it.

A woman?

Lord Ryder was a woman?

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